

What is claimed is:

1. A synergistic method of cleaning a soiled apparatus, comprising the steps of:
  - a. pre-rinsing said soiled apparatus with ozone to loosen the soil,
  - b. applying a cleaning agent; and
  - 5 c. cleaning said soiled apparatus until the soil is removed.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said soiled apparatus comprises an endoscope.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein ozone comprises an ozonated liquid.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein said ozonated liquid includes between 0.1 and 15 percent ozone by volume.
- 10 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said soil comprises biofilm.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein step b additionally comprises applying ozone in combination with said cleaning agent.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of rinsing a cleaned apparatus with ozone after step c is complete.
- 15 8. A method of supplementing a sterilizing process for an item harboring bio-contaminants, comprising the steps of:
  - a. cleaning said item in accordance with a pre-determined method,
  - b. applying a chemical sterilizing agent to said item in accordance with a pre-determined sterilizing method; and
  - 20 c. rinsing the item with ozone to substantially degrade any remaining chemical residue and biomatter on or in said item.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein said item comprises an endoscope.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said chemical sterilizing agents are selected from the group consisting of glutaraldehyde, paracetic acid, and ethylene oxide.
11. The method of claim 8, wherein ozone comprises an ozonated liquid.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein said ozonated liquid includes between 0.1 and 15 percent ozone by volume.
13. The method of claim 8, wherein said rinsing the item with ozone of step c is done in combination with step b such that said liquid chemical sterilizing agent is also substantially degraded.
14. A method of supplementing a cleaning and sterilizing process for a soiled item  
10 having bio-contaminants, comprising the steps of:
- a. pre-rinsing said soiled item with ozone to loosen the soil,
  - b. applying a cleaning agent to the item,
  - c. cleaning said soiled item until a clean item is produced,
  - d. applying a chemical sterilizing agent to said clean item to achieve  
15 decontamination; and
  - e. rinsing the clean item with ozone to substantially degrade any remaining chemical residue and biomatter on or in said apparatus.
15. The method of claim 14, wherein said soiled item comprises an endoscope.
16. The method of claim 14, wherein ozone comprises an ozonated liquid.
- 20 17. The method of claim 16, wherein said ozonated liquid includes between 0.1 and 15 percent ozone by volume.
18. The method of claim 14, wherein said soil comprises biofilm.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein step b additionally comprises applying ozone in combination with said cleaning agent.
20. The method of claim 14, wherein said chemical sterilizing agents are selected from the group consisting of glutaraldehyde, paracetic acid, and ethylene oxide.
- 5 21. A method of preventing re-contamination of a cleaned and disinfected item, comprising:
- a. rinsing said cleaned and disinfected item with water; and
  - b. flushing said item with ozone.
22. The method of claim 21, wherein said item is an endoscope.
- 10 23. The method of claim 21, wherein said water is filtered tap water.
24. The method of claim 21, wherein the flushing of said item with ozone is achieved by ozonating said water.
25. The method of claim 21, wherein said item is contained within a cleaning or sterilizing apparatus when step b occurs.
- 15 26. The method of claim 25, wherein ozone is added to the water prior to the water entering the cleaning or sterilizing apparatus containing said item.
27. A method of preventing cross-contamination of components within a sterilizing apparatus, comprising:
- a. disinfecting an item placed within said sterilizing apparatus according to a
- 20 predetermined method; and
- b. flushing said components with ozone after the completion of step a.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein said components comprise a chamber, a filter, a tray, and a port.